REPORTS ON PLANS AND PRIORITIES

2009–2010

Registry of the Specific Claims Tribunal

[Original signed by the Honourable Chuck Strahl, MP (Chilliwack–Fraser Canyon]

The Honourable Chuck Strahl, MP (Chilliwack–Fraser Canyon)
Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians

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DEPUTY HEAD'S MESSAGE

The coming into force of the *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* on October 16, 2008 established the Specific Claims Tribunal with the mandate to adjudicate specific claims through a fair and efficient process. Addressing specific claims is of utmost importance for First Nations and Canadians alike, as these claims are currently the source of a significant amount of tension and conflict across Canada. The resolution of these disputes can provide the groundwork for reconciliation and strengthened relationships, thereby building on the efforts of the Assembly of First Nations and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in drafting the legislation. The Registry of the Specific Claims Tribunal, which was established to manage the Tribunal's administrative affairs, will play a critical role in the success of the new Act. The Registry will be essential in providing the tools that are necessary for the Tribunal to conduct its business effectively and efficiently across Canada.

Since my appointment as the Deputy Head and Registrar of the Specific Claims Tribunal on October 16, 2008, we have been busy creating the structures and processes required for the success of the Registry and the Tribunal. Our vision for the next year is to finalize all start-up activities, which includes development of an electronic registry; implementation of a management accountability framework; implementation of an integrated human resource and business plan; renovation of the Registry's offices; and constituency outreach. With these essential elements in place, the Tribunal will be in a position to hear its first cases in 2009.

I am pleased to present the 2009–2010 Report on Plans and Priorities for the Registry of the Specific Claims Tribunal. I trust that the information contained within will provide Parliament and Canadians with consistent, comprehensive, balanced, and reliable information on the Registry's priorities, expenditure plans and expected results over the next three fiscal years.

[Original signed by Wayne D. Garnons-Williams]

Wayne D. Garnons-Williams
Deputy Head and Registrar
Specific Claims Tribunal

SECTION I: REGISTRY OVERVIEW

A) RAISON D'ÊTRE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Registry of the Specific Claims Tribunal is constituted under the *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* (which came into force on October 16, 2008) to manage the administrative affairs of the Specific Claims Tribunal. The Tribunal is an adjudicative body with the express mandate of deciding First Nations' specific claims, including breaches of treaties, fraud, illegal dispositions, or inadequate compensation, related to reserve lands.

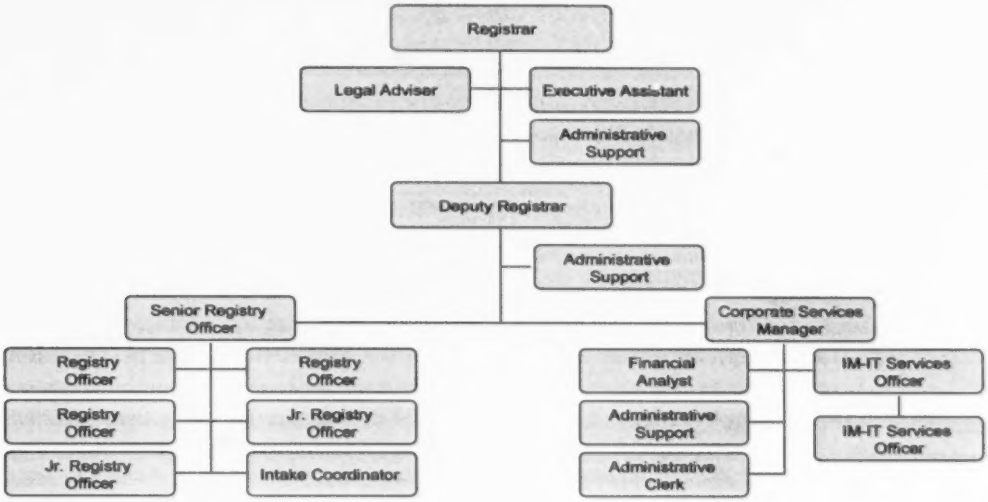
Although the Registry's offices are located in Ottawa, it provides services to the judiciary of the Tribunal and all interested First Nations and the Crown. The Registry provides administrative services to the judiciary, the legal profession, and the public. These services support the resolution of cases across Canada fairly, without delay, and with an efficient, effective, and economic application of resources. More specifically, the Registry is responsible for processing of specific claims, scheduling hearings, processing warrants, subpoenas, and writs, case and records management, systems management, provision of services in both official languages, and supporting judges of the Tribunal.

Treaty disputes have been an ongoing source of tension between First Nations and the federal government, and the *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* was developed jointly by the Assembly of First Nations and the Government of Canada as a means to quickly and fairly resolve most outstanding treaty grievances. This partnership is now extended to the development of recommendations related to the Tribunal's rules of practices and procedures.

Cooperation between First Nations and the Crown in the development, design, and drafting of the *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* represents a paradigm shift in relations, toward an overarching theme of respect for First Nations culture, traditions, and philosophy. It is a reminder of the importance and potential benefit that can accrue in seeking Aboriginal solutions to Aboriginal challenges.

These recent successes operate in a larger treaty dispute context of past broken promises, false starts, and mistrust. The Registry must ensure that administration of the Tribunal provides a process and results that are not only legitimate, but also perceived by First Nations as legitimate. To accomplish this, the Registry must respect and embrace Aboriginal cultural traditions in the administration of Tribunal operations nationally, and must work cooperatively with stakeholders to ensure that the spirit and intent of the legislation is fulfilled.

B) ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE REGISTRY



C) STRATEGIC OUTCOME: EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SPECIFIC CLAIMS TRIBUNAL

The sole strategic outcome for the Registry as approved by Treasury Board is the efficient administration of the Specific Claims Tribunal, which will be supported by program activity related to registry services.

The long-term benefit for Canadians will be the efficient and effective resolution of outstanding specific claims, with the potential for increased reconciliation and improved relationships amongst First Nations, the Government of Canada, and Canadians. The efficient operation of the Tribunal will create value for Canadians by saving costs associated with traditional Superior Court litigation and negotiations. Monetary awards determined by the judiciary of the Tribunal to successful claimants will provide First Nations with capital that may then be reinvested in their communities, contributing to the on-going prosperity of First Nations peoples in Canada.

D) PROGRAM ACTIVITY ARCHITECTURE

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SPECIFIC CLAIMS TRIBUNAL		
	PROGRAM PRIORITIES	**DESCRIPTION**
PROGRAM ACTIVITY: **REGISTRY SERVICES** **(Facilitate timely access to the Specific Claims Tribunal through client service, quality of advice, efficient and timely processing, and unbiased service delivery.)**	Develop and implement an electronic registry.	Effective case management is critical for quick resolution of claims and for overcoming logistic barriers to national access to the Registry. Electronic registry will support efficient Tribunal operations across Canada.
	Integrated human resource and business plan.	Essential to operating the Registry in a cost-effective, fair, and transparent manner.
	Renovation of Registry offices, including culturally sensitive multipurpose room.	Renovated offices to fit logistical needs of the Registry and Tribunal. Multipurpose room will provide digital hub to administer national activities of the Tribunal and a setting that is respectful of Aboriginal cultures.
	Public awareness strategy and campaign.	The focus of public awareness is the legal community, which represents First Nations in the resolution of treaty disputes, and which provides First Nations communities and the public with transparent electronic access to Registry records.
	Develop and measure customer service standards.	Customer service standards and evaluation provide objective criteria to ensure that the needs of clients and the public are being met.
LINK TO GOVERNMENT OF CANADA OUTCOMES: **SOCIAL AFFAIRS — A VIBRANT CANADIAN CULTURE AND HERITAGE**		

E) PLANNING SUMMARY

Financial and Human Resources

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Financial Resources (in millions of dollars)	2.6	2.6	2.6
Human Resources (FTEs)	19	19	19

Planning Summary Table

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SPECIFIC CLAIMS TRIBUNAL					
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS • Processing and hearing claims, while meeting the reasonable needs of parties, the judiciary, and the public, within allocated budget.		**TARGETS** • Administer Registry within financial allocation. • Overall client and public satisfaction with service levels. • Resolution of complaints and other issues quickly and effectively.			
PROGRAM ACTIVITY	**FORECAST SPENDING 2008–2009 (in millions of dollars)**	**PLANNED SPENDING (in millions of dollars)**			**ALIGNMENT TO GOVERNMENT OF CANADA OUTCOME**
		2009–2010	**2010–2011**	**2011–2012**	
REGISTRY SERVICES **(Facilitate timely access to the Specific Claims Tribunal through client service, quality of advice, efficient and timely processing, and unbiased service delivery.)**	1.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	**Social Affairs: A Vibrant Canadian Culture and Heritage**

Contribution and Linkages of Priorities to the Strategic Outcomes

MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES	TYPE	STRATEGIC OUTCOMES	DESCRIPTION
Develop and implement an integrated human resources and business plan, with associated policies.	New	Efficient administration of the Specific Claims Tribunal	Integrated human resource and business plan will clarify business processes, while ensuring that qualified human resources are retained, through implementation of succession plans, development plans, professional development plans, and performance plans. —Priority will be met by implementing best practices in tribunal administration and conducting recruitment, training, and team-building activities.
Development of work descriptions, classification of levels and staffing of qualified people.			Clear and concise work descriptions will ensure that processing of claims and delivery of services occurs in an efficient and effective manner. Qualified staff will provide effective Registry operations. Management's respect for the spirit and intent of the *Official Languages Act* and Treasury Board Employment Equity policies will encourage qualified, bilingual Aboriginal candidates to apply for positions at the Registry. —Priority will be met by contracting for the development and drafting of job descriptions, employment posters, and support staffing activities to meet operational needs.

Contribution and Linkages of Priorities to the Strategic Outcomes (continued)

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES	TYPE	STRATEGIC OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION
Develop and implement an electronic registry.	New	Efficient administration of the Specific Claims Tribunal	Will allow clients to file documents electronically through the Registry website. Will allow for the efficient processing of claims across Canada, through the reduction of resources dedicated to printing, binding, and delivery of documents. Will allow Tribunal judges immediate access to Registry operations from their respective chambers across Canada, and facilitate remote administration of Tribunal proceedings. Will provide an efficient way to track cases and case trends, thereby allowing issues to be identified and addressed quickly. Will result in improved and timely access to information by both internal and external clients, and will facilitate timely user access to the judicial process. —Priority will be met by contracting for the development and implementation of software and hardware case management systems that meets operational needs.
Complete renovations of Registry offices, including culturally sensitive multipurpose room.			Will ensure that business operations are carried out efficiently. Will provide digital hub to administer national activities of the Tribunal and a setting that is respectful of Aboriginal cultures. —Priority will be met by completing renovation of offices and a culturally sensitive multipurpose room that meets the business needs of the Registry, the judiciary, and our clients.
Assist the judiciary of the Tribunal in drafting rules of practice and procedure.			Tribunal rules are a core consideration in expediting claims. Efficient rules will result in timely resolution of claims. —Priority will be met by exploring and implementing fact-finding best practices, through processes that respect both the spirit and intent of collaborative recommendations by the Assembly of First Nations and the Department of Justice.
Make the Canadian public at large aware of the Tribunal's services and results. Promote awareness among the stakeholder groups of the Registry's operations and procedures.			Public awareness will highlight results for Canadians, and will provide transparency in the Registry's operations. A public presence for the Tribunal will foster understanding of federal treaty relations among the Canadian public at large. Awareness of the Tribunal and its process will provide claimants and their legal counsel with knowledge that enables them to bring their claims to the Tribunal. —Priority will be met by developing a user-friendly, informative, interactive Web page; participating in media opportunities where appropriate; attending and participating in conferences; conducting outreach; and creating communications materials.

F) RISK ANALYSIS

Operating Environment

In 1973, the Government of Canada introduced its Specific Claims Policy to resolve First Nations' specific claims. The policy was revisited in 1982, to include consideration of specific claims based on inadequate compensation for taking or damaging reserve land, as well as situations of fraud by government agents regarding reserve lands. These revisions also focused on the process and guidelines for submitting specific claims.

The Specific Claims Policy was revised again in 1991. The new revision included removal of the bar on pre-confederation specific claims and establishment of the Indian Specific Claims Commission as a temporary measure until the Government of Canada could formulate legislation to create an independent entity with binding powers. In light of the legislation creating this independent entity (the Specific Claims Tribunal), the Indian Specific Claims Commission will conclude their activities by March 31, 2009.

Notwithstanding the Tribunal's judicial mandate, the specific claims administrative process, as managed by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, has four main phases: review and assessment; determination of validity; acceptance or rejection; and negotiations. It is estimated that there are 785 specific claims, with approximately 580 at the assessment stage, and 58 in negotiation.

The *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* creates strict timelines with respect to the assessment and negotiation of specific claims. The Government of Canada will have three years to communicate acceptance or rejection of a specific claim. If accepted for negotiation, the parties have three years from notification to resolve the claim. If after three years of negotiation the claim is not resolved, a First Nation may file a claim with the Tribunal.

All new specific claims submissions must meet a minimum standard with respect to the type of information and manner of presentation required to file with the Government of Canada.

Risks

There are a number of risks inherent to the establishment of a new institution. Specifically for the Registry, there is the risk of substantial delay in the renovation of the Registry's offices, including the culturally sensitive multipurpose room or the development, and implementation of an electronic registry. These risks can be mitigated through tendered contracts with qualified service providers who have proven track records for on-time delivery.

Another risk that could impact the effectiveness of the Registry is a set of rules of practice and procedure that do not meet the needs of either the Crown or First Nations. Such rules may not prove to be efficient or result in quick resolution of hearings. This risk can be mitigated through a collaborative (First Nations/Crown) user based rules

designing team; the extensive study of international best practices in other fact-finding tribunals, commissions, or courts as well as through implementation of an innovative electronic registry.

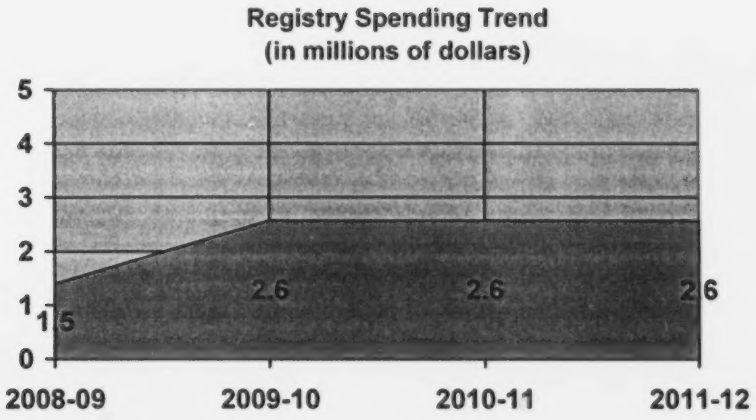
External human resources risk factors could include the potential lack of qualified labour knowledgeable enough to carry out work at the Registry in a culturally sensitive manner. Contributing factors could include lack of advancement opportunities within the organization due to its small size; lack of educated and skilled labour; the highly specialized nature of the work, and the demographically large workforce eligible for retirement within the next ten years.

Manifestation of risk would lead to delays in the Tribunal's ability to receive and process claims, and could lead to the breakdown of efficient business operations. Mitigation of risk could include development and delivery of orientation and training programs to accelerate the process of knowledge transfer, corporate succession planning, bridging of new post-secondary graduates into introductory Registry positions, and the development of internal career evaluation and advancement mechanisms, including learning assignments and interdepartmental exchanges among similar federal boards, commissions, and tribunals.

Claims will be brought to the Tribunal on the initiative of First Nations, and there are other avenues that they may use for redress. The risk is that there may be substantially more, or substantially fewer, claims brought to the Tribunal than projected. More claims may result in significant delays, while fewer claims may result in the unnecessary expenditure of resources. In order to respond effectively to either scenario, the Registry will closely monitor the progress of potential claims and attempt to ascertain which of them may come before the Tribunal. An accurate forecast of caseload will require an excellent working relationship with stakeholders.

The last identifiable risk is the potential that First Nations will come to view the Tribunal as an agent of government, or that the Crown will view the Tribunal as favouring First Nations, thereby exhibiting an appearance of being unfair and/or biased. It is critical that the Registry and the Tribunal implement procedures that are "at arms length," so as to protect and safeguard their independence.

G) EXPENDITURE PROFILE



The Registry came into existence when its constituting legislation came into force on October 16, 2008. The $1.5 million for the 2008–2009 fiscal year reflects the lack of a full year of operation and covers partial start-up expenditures and a small portion of salary dollars. Once the Registry is in full operation, projected expenditures may need to be revised to reflect either the need for additional operating funds or potential budget surpluses.

H) VOTED AND STATUTORY ITEMS

VOTE NUMBER	TRUNCATED VOTE	MAIN ESTIMATES (in millions of dollars)	
		2008–2009[1]	2009–2010
55	Program Expenditures	0	2.4
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	0	0.2
	TOTAL	**0**	**2.6**

[1] The *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* established the Registry of the Specific Claims Tribunal when it came into force on October 16, 2008; therefore, the Registry did not provide main estimates. $1.5.million was sought in Supplementary Estimates (C) 2008-2009, that was tabled in the House of Commons on February 12, 2009.

SECTION II:
ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME

A) EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SPECIFIC CLAIMS TRIBUNAL

Strategic Outcome

The sole strategic outcome for the Registry as approved by Treasury Board is the efficient administration of the Specific Claims Tribunal, which will be supported by activities related to registry services. The Registry provides administrative services to the judiciary, the legal profession, and the public in support of resolving cases across Caanda fairly, without delay, and with an efficient, effective, and economic application of resources. Specifically, the Registry is responsible for intake and processing of specific claims, scheduling of hearings, giving notice to parties and affected individuals, production of documents, case and records management, provision of information to the public in both official languages, and attending all Tribunal hearings in support of the presiding Tribunal judge for the administration of justice.

Benefit to Canadians

Canada's Performance 2006 is divided into four key areas of policy: economic, social, international, and government affairs. The Registry's strategic outcome is aligned with *Social Affairs: A Vibrant Canadian Culture and Heritage*.

The long-term benefit for Canadians will be the efficient and effective resolution of outstanding specific claims across Canada, some of which currently provide the impetus for disruptive disputes at a financial and psychological cost to Canadians. Efficient operation of the Tribunal will create value for Canadians by saving costs associated with traditional Superior Court litigation, disputes, and lengthy negotiations.

Resolution of specific claims through the Specific Claims Tribunal will also remove a barrier for reconciliation among First Nations, other Canadians, and the Government of Canada. Monetary awards will provide an opportunity for successful First Nations to access capital that may then be reinvested in their communities, contributing to the on-going prosperity of First Nations people living on reserves.

Program Activity

The strategic objective will be met through registry services program activity. Registry services will provide for the intake, processing, and electronic management of all claims documents and related material. Registry officers will attend all Tribunal hearings in support of the presiding Tribunal judge and the administration of justice. Registry services will also ensure proper records and systems management and efficient

administrative operations of the Tribunal, as well as communications to the public, claimants, governments, and other interested parties, in both official languages.

Program activity should result in

- timely access to the Tribunal across Canada through client service, quality of advice, efficient and timely processing, and unbiased service delivery;
- promotion of awareness and understanding of the *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* and related rules and procedures;
- smooth and efficient functioning of hearings; and
- provision of necessary tools and resources to allow Tribunal judges to perform their duties.

Performance indicators include

- the number of certificates of readiness for hearing issued on an annual basis;
- the measure of time between the receipt of a specific claim and issuance of the certificate of readiness for hearing;
- the level of awareness and understanding of the Specific Claims Tribunal rules and procedures within the core user groups, namely counsel for the stakeholders (First Nations and Crown alike);
- the number and quality of information projects;
- the level of efficiency of registry services in responding to enquiries, in processing documentation submitted by clients, in preparing the tribunal file for hearing, and in the dissemination of decisions rendered by the Tribunal;
- extent of satisfaction of parties involved in the hearings with respect to Registry services such as facilities, staff, and response time; and
- the level of satisfaction, on the part of the judicial members of the Tribunal, with the services provided, such as quality of work, tools, resources, and timeliness of service.

Performance targets include

- a Registry case back-log at or near zero;
- attain or exceed benchmark in the completion of Registry preparation of hearings;

- average life of Registry files from opening of the file to issuance of certificate of readiness for hearing within acceptable standards;

- attendance and participation in relevant tribunal administration and/or Aboriginal law conferences and meetings involving stakeholders and/or their counsel;

- completion of service standards and detailed targets for responding to enquiries, processing documentation, prompt scheduling of hearings, and issuance of decisions.

- achievement of service standards in delivery of all services.

- resolution of complaints, concerns, and emerging issues as soon as practicable, without attributable delay; and

- internal and external client satisfaction with Registry facilities and staff, plus quality and timeliness of Registry work as measured by implementation of an objective survey and by client feedback.

B) PROGRAM ACTIVITY BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME

The Registry has the sole strategic outcome of providing the efficient administration of the Specific Claims Tribunal to facilitate prompt access to the administration of justice without compromising independence.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="6">STRATEGIC OUTCOME: EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SPECIFIC CLAIMS TRIBUNAL

PROGRAM ACTIVITY: REGISTRY SERVICES</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">2009–2010</th><th colspan="2">2010–2011</th><th colspan="2">2011–2012</th></tr>
<tr><th>FTEs</th><th>Planned Spending (millions of dollars)</th><th>FTEs</th><th>Planned Spending (millions of dollars)</th><th>FTEs</th><th>Planned Spending (millions of dollars)</th></tr>
<tr><td>19</td><td>2.6</td><td>19</td><td>2.6</td><td>19</td><td>2.6</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">EXPECTED RESULTS</th><th colspan="2">PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</th><th colspan="2">TARGETS</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Timely access to the Tribunal across Canada through client service, quality of advice, efficient and timely processing, and unbiased service delivery.</td><td colspan="2">Number of certificates of readiness for hearing issued on an annual basis.</td><td colspan="2">No Registry case back-log.

Attain or exceed benchmark in conduct and completion of Registry preparation of hearings.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Measure of time between the receipt of a specific claim and the issuance of readiness for hearing certificate.</td><td colspan="2">Average life of Registry files from opening of file to issuance of certificate of readiness for hearing within acceptable standards.</td></tr>
</table>

Promotion of awareness and understanding of the *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* and related rules and procedures.	Level of awareness and understanding of Specific Claims Tribunal rules and procedures within the core user groups, namely counsel for the stakeholders (First Nations and Crown alike).	Attendance and participation in relevant tribunal administration and/or Aboriginal law conferences and meetings involving stakeholders and/or their counsel.
	Number and quality of information projects.	Various information media made available to relevant parties in both official languages. Website information complete, accurate, and updated regularly.
Smooth and efficient functioning of hearings.	Level of efficiency of registry services in responding to inquiries, processing documentation submitted by clients, preparation of Tribunal file for hearing, and dissemination of decisions rendered by the Tribunal.	Completion of service standards and detailed targets for responding to enquiries, processing documentation, prompt scheduling of hearings, and issuance of decisions. Achievement of service standards in delivery of all services.
	Extent of satisfaction of parties involved in the hearings with respect to Registry services such as facilities, staff, and response time.	Internal and external client satisfaction with Registry facilities and staff, plus quality and timeliness of Registry work as measured by implementation of an objective survey and by client feedback. Resolve concerns and emerging issues as soon as practicable, without attributable delay.
Provision of necessary tools and resources to allow Tribunal judges to perform their duties across Canada.	Level of satisfaction with the services provided, such as quality of work, tools, resources, and timeliness of services.	Internal client satisfaction with quality of work and resources, measured by implementing an objective survey and seeking judicial feedback.

Program Activities Summary

The three essential elements to meeting the performance indicators, expected results, and targets are the availability of appropriate, an efficient electronic registry, facilities and qualified human resources.

1) Electronic Registry

The implementation of an electronic registry is a vital strategic step toward providing efficient registry services. The registry will include integrated case management, an interactive Internet portal providing internal and external clients with access to the electronic registry, and an e-filing system for documents related to claims. A new case management system will establish a core set of case management functionalities for the business of the Registry. The ultimate goal is to provide an electronic tribunal file that is readily accessible by authorized users, Registry staff and the judiciary. This information management system could mirror the contents of an official hard copy file, making possible the provision of hearing records that are electronic and "paperless."

2) Facilities

Appropriate facilities are essential to culturally respectful delivery of Registry services. Users of facilities need to work in a fully functional environment that creates no logistic impediments. In the context of specific claims, culturally sensitive facilities are critical to the efficient and effective administration of justice, as well as to the satisfaction of external and internal clients and the public. The Registry will seek to provide facilities that take all of these factors into consideration.

3) Human Resources

The Registry is currently developing work descriptions that will allow it to effectively and efficiently classify and staff positions. In this important early construction phase, careful, clear, and transparent construction of succession planning, external recruitment, training, internal evaluation, and internal promotion is essential for employee retention and career development. Among Registry priorities for the coming year are integrating learning objectives that are directly related to the Registry officer level, and that cover all aspects of providing the services of a registry to our internal and external clients. Internal evaluation will provide staff with the greatest chance of advancement and promotion; this in turn will promote retention of talented staff, minimize the process of external staffing, and optimize service to Registry clients.

C) INTERNAL SERVICES PROGRAM DELIVERY

The Registry will be developing and implementing an integrated human resource and business framework, incorporating quality assurance methods such as performance agreements, performance evaluations, and succession plans. Planning will include both risk management and financial management.

D) PLANNING HIGHLIGHTS

- Essential financial policies in place by April 2009.
- Office renovation, including culturally sensitive multipurpose room completed by April 2009.
- Integrated human resource and business plan completed by May 2009.
- Essential human resources policies in place by May 2009.
- Initial core Registry staff hired and trained by June 2009.
- Other essential policies in place by July 2009.
- Case management system operational by July 2009.
- Communication plan in place by August 2009.
- Quality service standards in place by August 2009.
- Tribunal offices completed by September 2009.
- Registry succession plan with internal evaluation, assessment, and advancement standards for internal promotion completed by October 2009.
- Specific Claims Tribunal website is operational for clients by November 2009.
- Electronic access to the Registry for both external and internal clients available by January 2010.
- Electronic filing with the Registry operational by February 2010.

E) BENEFITS FOR CANADIANS

Canada's Performance 2006 is divided into four key policy areas: economic, social, international, and government affairs. The Registry's strategic outcome is aligned with *Social Affairs: A Vibrant Canadian Culture and Heritage*.

The long-term benefit for Canadians will be the efficient and effective resolution of outstanding specific claims across Canada, some of which currently involve disruptive disputes that entail financial and psychological costs to Canadians. The efficient operation of the Tribunal will create value for Canadians by saving costs that would have otherwise been associated with disputes in the traditional superior court litigation system. Also there are the intangible benefits to all Canadians of having improved cultural harmony and understanding through the successful resolution of treaty disputes.

Resolution of specific claims will also remove a barrier for the reconciliation of First Nations, the Government of Canada, and the Canadian public at large, allowing for greater harmony and collaboration in other joint Aboriginal–federal issues. Monetary awards will provide the opportunity for successful First Nations to access capital that may then be reinvested in their communities, contributing to the ongoing prosperity of First Nations people living on reserves.

SECTION III:

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Specific Claims Tribunal website: www.sct-trp.ca/

***Specific Claims Tribunal Act*:** laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showtdm/cs/S-15.36

Further information on this document can be obtained by contacting

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